

Armenia

I. Tattered Remnants of An Ancient Race

By Noel Buxton, M.P.

Author of "Travel and Politics in Armenia"

IT is difficult to define geographically the country of the Armenians because they have not yet achieved independence; but their homelands may be said to include (1) the vilayets—i.e., Turkish provinces—that make up the north-east corner of Asia Minor, namely, Van, Bitlis, Erzerum, and Trebizond; (2) adjoining regions across the old Russian frontier—i.e., the Russian frontier in the time of the Tsar—best located as centring round the towns of Kars, Alexandropol, and Erivan, the capital.

Politically distinguished by the names Turkish Armenia and Russian Armenia respectively, these two areas nevertheless form one continuation westwards of the great plateau which, though in Asia, is essentially part of the European geographical system. The Armenian portion of this magnificent plateau stands at an average height of from 4,000 to 6,000 feet. Above it rise vast mountain masses, and in Russian Armenia Mount Ararat (17,055 feet) furnishes one of the most inspiring sights in the world.

The Armenians are therefore a highland people, subject to a

bracing climate in summer and long, cold, and severe winters. A milder climate exists in a strip of low country along the coast of Trebizond, on the shores of the Black Sea, protected like the French and Italian Riviera from the piercing winds by the inland mountain wall.

For a certain sombre and impressive grandeur no part of the world surpasses

these mountainous regions. Ararat is higher than Mont Blanc, but it stands out in sheer loneliness, like some solitary giant eternally cloaked in snow. I can picture the scene now as I beheld it from the balcony of a village priest's house in the mountains in the autumn of 1913. In the foreground, quite near to us, the rich black velvet of buffaloes walking slowly home stood out in sharp contrast to the fresh-green of the grass; down the road Russian gendarmes and the workers of the village were gossiping idly outside the inn. Suddenly our attention was drawn away to the panorama of the mountain peaks. The sun was setting. Rich, almost lurid, colours flashed forth from behind the blackening silhouette of



REFUGEE CHILD FINDS WARMTH

This little Armenian boy in bitter winter weather in Van is keeping his feet warm by standing on a manure heap

Photo. M. O. Williams

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mountains. One would have imagined that molten flames were being shot out from a giant forge on the horizon. When the sun sank from our view, the hills remained bathed in colour, staining the whiteness of the snow with iridescent light. Armenia is practically a treeless country, woodlands being scarce owing

to the chronic neglect and anarchy of the Ottoman Government. Of rivers, branches of the great rivers Euphrates and Tigris have their source in the mountain ranges. A remarkable feature is the great lakes, Van (1,300 square miles), which is over 5,000 feet above the sea-level; Genkcho, in

Russian Armenia, north-east of Erivan, which is 6,000 feet high; and Lake Urmia (about 4,000 feet above sea level).

How grateful a sight, after many days' travel through the mountains, is the sudden unfolding of the magnificent panorama of Lake Van, lying 2,000 feet below, a shimmering expanse of blue water, and, rising above and around it, ridge after ridge of mountains, and in the far distance the bare peak of Ararat.

These are the grand features of Armenia, but usually the traveller is conscious of sultry journeys across sun-baked plains or plateaus relieved only by the sight of a camel convoy or a bullock cart rumbling heavily and awkwardly along, raising a cloud of white dust.

The Armenians, subjected to the hardy life of this mountainous area, are a virile, energetic race. The men are usually tall and dark. They tend to be silent, deliberate of speech, and are endowed with the same persistent and dogged qualities that distinguish the Bulgarians. The women are frequently handsome, enjoying fine health, and making good mothers. Western Europeans do



AN ARMENIAN GIRL WIFE

In the hope of escaping a Kurdish or Turkish harem, this peasant girl, with her load of native jewelry, was married at the age of fourteen, and then sent to study at a Protestant missionary school

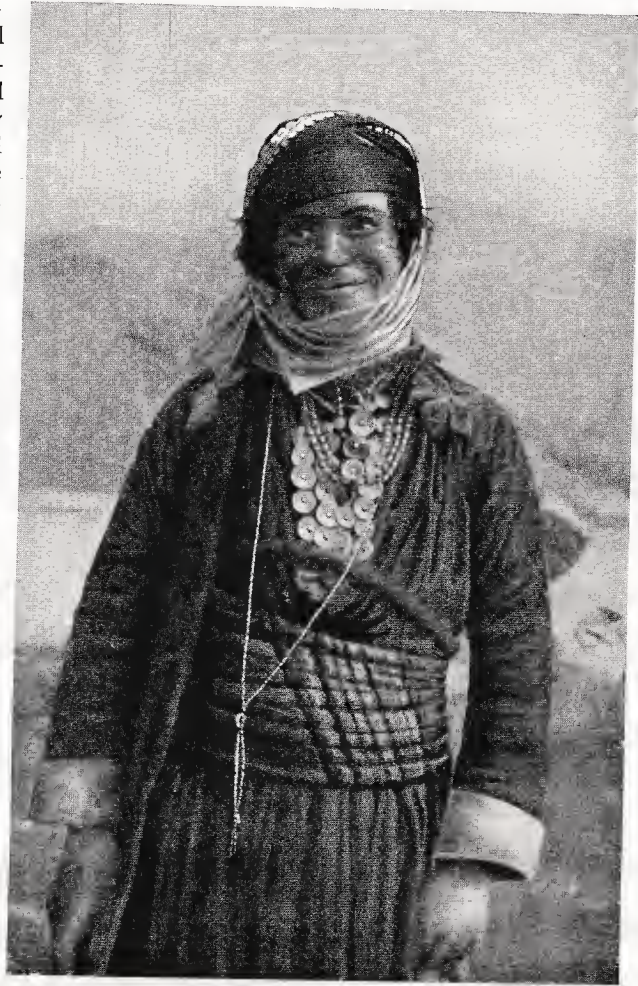
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not often come into contact with the typical Armenian. The impressions usually entertained of the Armenian apply only to the merchants and commercial men who have established businesses in the West and America. For shrewdness and "smartness," these business men are hard to beat, and are as capable in this direction as the Jews.

But Armenia is mainly an agricultural country, and the majority of the two million Armenians who inhabited Turkish Armenia before the massacres and deportation of 1915, and of the million Armenians in Russian Armenia, were, and are, peasants. The soil of the Armenian highlands is rich and fertile if it is irrigated and well cultivated. Unless man's efforts are allowed scope, the land, owing to the burning sun, becomes as sterile as the Desert. But the industry of the Armenian peasant, given a period of peace and security—a rare experience—is such that, from land which is apparently barren, rich cereal and agricultural produce is obtained. It was surprising on one

occasion, after travelling for days over a waste of sandy hills, to halt at an Armenian village and be served with luscious apricots and melons. These were placed before us in abundance. Large quantities were grown from the arid soil, which yielded readily to a little irrigation.

Naturally enough, their methods of agriculture are comparatively primitive, especially in Turkish Armenia. The peasants have not sufficient means nor enough security from raids to enable



WOMAN DEVIL-WORSHIPPER OF MOUNT ARARAT

She belongs to the far-scattered sect of the Yezedis, who worship both God and Satan, and are devoted to peacocks, snakes, water, and the sun. They are forbidden to learn reading and writing

Photo M O Williams

them to make use of expensive machinery from the West. Implements, largely home-made—the Armenian makes a good mechanic if he is given the opportunity—serve the purpose. In Turkish Armenia, for instance, peasants may be seen treading out the corn with ox-drawn, makeshift machinery which well illustrates their ingenuity under natural and political difficulties.

The Armenian farmer uses, as a rule, a wooden plough drawn by a team of oxen or buffaloes. When



ARMENIANS OF THE PERSIAN BORDER TYPE

Some of these Eastern Armenians are remarkably different in features from the central highlander class. In spite of Zoroastrian, Moslem, and other persecutors, the Armenian Christians have made many converts, such as the Iranian figures in this group, and many of the Kurds incline to faith in the Cross rather than in the Crescent—perhaps only to anger the Turks

cereals are cultivated, the soil, after ploughing, is merely sown broadcast, and then the fields are left to Nature, no hoeing being done. There are, of course, no reaping machines, and the farmer has to be content with a sickle. For threshing-floors they have platforms of beaten earth, and the treading of the corn is effected by a wooden machine, which looks like a sledge, drawn by oxen. Winnowers at work in a valley dominated by Mount Ararat make a picturesque sight. The chaff is removed from the grain by throwing it up in the wind, the heavier material falling to the ground and then being collected for the mill.

The Armenian, being a good cultivator, industrious and intelligent, would readily adopt improved methods, but, subject to the constant danger of attack,

he is not given the incentive to grow more than enough for his own needs.

In Russian Armenia the land is no better, but prosperous areas are much more frequent and richer because of the greater security under Russian rule. In the valley of the Araxes, which circles Mount Ararat, you see Armenian peasants at their best. On this alluvial plain, tobacco, rice, and cotton are grown in small fields separated from one another by banks made of mud. In summer the dryness of the atmosphere causes the soil to be parched and cracked, and fine dust settles thickly on the surface.

Here the plains, through man's mastery over Nature, seemed rich like those of Lombardy. Peach and mulberry orchards abounded in every village, and were protected by high



REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF ARMENIANS OF NATURAL ABILITY

During the years of disaster to Armenia, produced by the Russian Revolution, this party of men emerged as natural leaders on the west of Lake Van. They represent all classes, and show that one general Armenian type is the Celt, known as Alpine, which stretches across Middle Europe into Ireland

Photo Maynard Owen Williams



AN ARMENIAN FAMILY UNDER PATRIARCHAL RULE

Under thousands of years' struggle for mere existence, the Armenian household has held to the strict rule of the grandfather. An absolute monarch, he gives orders and the rest obey; they speak when spoken to. Only in his absence is the eldest son his own master. A girl marrying into the family is an uncomplaining servant, under the grandmother



MENDICANT DERVISH OF MUSH

This Mullah of Mush is one of the fanatic Turks who egged on the Kurds to massacre the unhappy Armenians. His begging bowl of calabash, beautifully carved, would probably be worth £10 here

mud walls. For the most part in this valley the peasants were engaged in market-gardening.

Many of the peasants are not uninstructed. The Armenians, as a rule, attach a great deal of importance to

education. The more wealthy and prosperous in the Russian Armenian towns used to send their sons to universities at Paris or Petrograd, and some of these have become conspicuous later as lecturers or professors in Oriental languages in London or Oxford.

The Armenians have their own university college at Etchmiadzin, just over the old Russian frontier. The peasants obtain their instruction from the village schools, maintained by voluntary aid through the generosity and enthusiasm of their more cultured compatriots. I remember, in a district bordering upon the barbarous regions of Kurdistan, coming upon a village school where a solitary teacher in this remote outpost was sacrificing his life for the sake of the younger generation, and attempting to make there a little centre of civilization.

But the most picturesque and, indeed, romantic centres of education are the monasteries which are dotted here and there in the highlands of Armenia. In remote centuries the monks were the sole educators, and they taught, in addition to learning, carpentry and weaving—to which many of them had been apprenticed—and agriculture. At Varag,

in Turkish Armenia, stands a beautiful old monastery, where a boys' secondary school is attached to the establishment. It stands on a lofty hillside, its portico of three half-Gothic, half-Saxon arches supporting

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a double-storied arched tower or belfry—a welcome sight in the remote and wild interior. Turkish or Kurd raiders have on more than one occasion yielded to the temptation to sack it. But the last attempt was beaten off by the “young blood” of the college, assisted by Armenian rebels. I found here about seventy boys and seven teachers at play in the courtyard. They plied me with questions about the Scout movement in England.

The Armenians are, as everybody knows, Christians. In fact they were the earliest people to be converted to Christianity, through the efforts of Saint Gregory the Illuminator. The tiny chapel which he himself built, A.D. 303, still stands at Etchmiadzin. It is the “Mother Throne” of the Armenian Church, and around it has

been built a monastery and cathedral, cut off from the world by huge, crumbling walls.

In ritual and liturgy the Armenian Church has distinct features of its own. Isolated as the Armenians are in regions where Mahomedanism flourishes, it was natural that their Church should become an expression of their nationality. There are pagan survivals as in most Oriental Christian Churches. Animals are sacrificed in some monasteries. Getting up early one morning to attend liturgy in a remote monastery in Turkish Armenia, we were amazed to find the courtyard stained lavishly with blood. Outside the church porch, the abbot explained to us, five goats and a sheep had been killed, and the meat had been disposed of for cooking purposes in huge iron pots,



ARMENIANS VAINLY TRYING TO REBUILD VAN CITY

The Turks had passed through the city, leaving only fire-scarred ruins. These men were busy sawing timber, with their quaint, square-framed saws, for making doors and windows to the hovels in which a multitude of women and children had gathered in bitter winter weather

Photo. Maynard Owen Williams



BREAD LINE OF ARMENIAN WOMEN IN THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

These are some of the refugees saved by a mission in the days when the weakness of the Russian Bolsheviks encouraged a Turkish army to ravage Armenia. When further charity failed, the Armenians tried to save themselves by accepting the Bolshevik faith, but their sufferings scarcely diminished

Photo Maynard Owen William



ARMENIAN MAIDS AT SCHOOL, OR PERSECUTION A SPUR TO EDUCATION

Long before the war, the Armenians adopted education as an instrument for preserving their nationality. Then the schooling offered to the neglected girls by American and other missions came into favour. They were the best refuges in Moslem periods of slave-making and murder



ARMENIAN REFUGEE WOMEN OF THE HILLS

They are not remarkable for beauty, for they live in Kurdistan, and the photograph was taken at the end of the years of massacre, when most Armenian girls, remarkable for beauty, had vanished into the women's apartments of Moslem households to end their life in misery



GROUP OF YEZEDI WOMEN PEDLARS FROM MOUNT ARARAT

The devil-worshipping creed is spread from Syria to Mesopotamia, Kurdistan, and Armenia. These Yezedi women from Mount Ararat are Kurds, and have come to trade with starving Armenians under protection of an American Mission. They are filling their bottles at a spring by the river

Photos Maynard Owen Williams



MARTYRED BISHOP OF THE LESSER ARMENIANS OF ZEITUN

He represented the old kingdom of Lesser Armenia in the Mediterranean. His 10,000 people withstood the Turks for centuries, and at Zeitun resisted a besieging Turkish army in 1895. The famous bishop, shown in Armenian canonicals, with his sturdy acolytes, has since been slain

Photo, W. Llewellyn Williams

and then distributed among the poor of the abbot's large parish.

On the other hand, the Armenian Church is free from the practice of eikon kissing, which still prevails among the Greeks. The Armenians do, indeed, place eikons and bas-reliefs on the altar, but they are careful to distinguish them from ordinary eikons, and dedicate them

specially for church use. You will not find any eikons in their homes, and in the church the only picture they usually allow is that of the Virgin and Child over the altar.

The Protestant leaven provided by the American missionaries in Asia Minor has been an inestimable benefit to the Armenian Church. The Armenian clergy have thrown open the doors of



HAPLESS LEADER OF THE OLDEST NATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH

This dignified Armenian Patriarch, pressed, like his people, between Turk and Bolshevik, is honoured as a political figure as well as a religious leader by his broken, suffering race, who have no country but only a religion. He stands for a national Church established by the Armenian king, Tiridates, in A.D. 274, a generation before Christianity was tolerated in the Roman Empire

their churches to the missionaries, and allowed them to occupy their pulpits, and what they have cultivated is a spirit of piety with which we are conversant in the Churches of the West, which was almost entirely absent. There is also a branch of the Roman Catholic Church in Armenia, but usually its members are those who do not wish to cling so tenaciously as their

compatriots to their nationality. The courtyards of monasteries or churches resound with merry-making on wedding-days. For the peasant of Armenia is then in holiday mood and gala attire. They come in from neighbouring villages and assemble for the dance which takes place towards evening. I had the good fortune to witness one in a remote town near the Persian



THE HAPPY CENTRE OF ARMENIAN LIFE AND LOVE

This is only one variety of the old-fashioned cradles for Armenian babies. The embroidered cloths are certain to be the work of the proud mother, the Armenian women being famous for their embroideries. Baby boys are the family's pride and increase the prestige of the young wife, for the race keeps the warlike habit of counting its strength by males

Photo, W. Llewellyn Williams

frontier. The sound of a flute pierced the air with a wild strain, accompanied by the beats of a drum. It had a singular effect of remoteness, simple beauty, and pathos. In the falling twilight three slender figures could be seen executing simple rhythmic movements; these soon gave way to one figure—that of a child, dressed in a long white frock, who seemed to hold the crowd spellbound, as she swayed to and fro, giving way as she approached. Presently she vanished, and the men began to dance arm-in-arm, five or six in a row, reminding one of the wild gipsy dances which have been staged in London in Russian ballets.

Of folk-dances such as these the Armenian peasants are extremely fond.

In the towns, especially in Russian Armenia, the pleasures of the population are more sophisticated. In Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, built largely by Armenian brains, and in which a large number of Armenians live, there are theatres and an opera-house. But here, as is natural, it is Russian drama and music to which expression is mainly given. The best of the larger theatres are under Armenian management. The educated Armenians are fond of music, and in the Russian towns everyone who can afford a piano usually has one. Many paint well, and have



YOUNG ROBBER LORD OF THE CASTLED CRAGS OF KURDISTAN

Here is the essential Kurd, with one of his varlets. He holds a little mountain barony of serfs and fighting retainers, rules as he pleases, plunders as much as he can, and quietly runs a brigandage business. He has won much land from the Armenians, but is equally ready to attack Persians, Turks, or people of the Mesopotamian borders at any time if they weaken

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made reputations in other countries. The Armenians have a special affection for the printing press. In the school at Varag mentioned before, a small modern printing machine was in use. Wherever a colony of Armenians settle, there you will find almost immediately a newspaper coming into being. Under the regime of the Sultan Abdul Hamid printing activities were severely restricted, but even so, printing presses were founded at Van in 1859.

During the years 1908-1914—the period of Constitutional Government under the Young Turks—there was comparative liberty, and in almost every large town in Asia Minor printing presses sprang up through the efforts of Armenians. In this respect they seem to express in a modern fashion the instincts of their ancestors who secured the preservation in the library of the monastery at Etchmiadzin of about four thousand manuscript volumes (fifth to eighth centuries) of



A FIGHTING ARMENIAN WHO MIGHT HAVE LED HIS NATION

This picturesque cavalryman is Major Keri, a famous modern Armenian leader, who fell in battle during the Great War. Many other Armenians then proved that their race had lost none of its old military virtue, but, as the Turks had forbidden their Armenians to carry arms since 1878, the nation generally was not able to defend itself in the final catastrophe

Photo, W. Llewellyn Williams



ARMENIAN FRUIT PEDLARS IN THE CAPITAL OF KURDISTAN

After being driven from the wildly picturesque town of Bitlis, which became the capital of the Kurds, the Armenians returned, under Turkish rule, to the mountain-ringed garden city and trafficked in the street. Even in times of peace, however, it was not always safe for them to walk more than twenty minutes in one direction

Greek and Syriac patristic literature. As craftsmen the Armenians show considerable capacity. They have been long renowned for their skill and artistry in carpet-making. Most of the carpets known as Turkish are manufactured by them, and sold to the Western world by merchants and traders at Constantinople. In one of the monasteries visited in Turkish Armenia the central hall was found to be carpeted with a rug stated to be over four hundred years old. At Adana and other towns in Cilicia—a province in South-East Asia Minor whose shores are washed by the Mediterranean Sea—carpet-making flourishes. Cilicia, it

should be noted, has a large if not preponderating number of Armenians, and should not be lost sight of in any settlement defining the future status of the mainland, so to speak, of Armenia, that is to say, the provinces and vilayets of Russian and Turkish Armenia.

A false impression of Armenian social and industrial aspects would be left if the above account were not corrected by stating that the national life has been seriously obstructed, if not brought completely to a standstill, by the sufferings of the last eight years. The Armenian inhabitants of Turkish Armenia have been scattered, uprooted from the homeland, and sadly reduced



THREE YOUNG DEFENDERS OF THE GARDEN-LAND OF ARTEMID

These little fellows walked from the lovely garden-land of Artemid to Van. They demanded real guns, but succouring missionaries gave them food and socks. What urged these hapless children on was the fact that most of them had a murdered father or a mother driven to suicide

Photo. Maynard Owen Williams

by the Young Turks' nationalist policy of massacre and deportation. Some thousands survive in refugee camps in the Middle East, and others have crowded into Russian Armenia, which, in its turn, has become subject to conditions of famine and disease.

Truly it may be said that the Armenian nation has become a nation of refugees. But hope must not be abandoned, nor efforts relaxed until they have recovered their rights and live once again that national life which is so rich in its capacity for industry and happiness.



HOW THE CHILDREN OF ARMENIA TRAINED FOR NATIONAL DEFENCE

A pathetic scene in the central highlands of Armenia between the first and second Turkish massacres. Boys made wooden muskets, learnt a smattering of drill, and then came to headquarters, asking for rifles and cartridges. They are seen displaying their military skill to the commandant of Van



PRESENTING A SWORD OF HONOUR TO THE ARTEMID BOY CAPTAIN

It was only a wooden sword, given by the chief of the American Mission of relief, but it was presented to the twelve-year-old captain of eight-year-old troops, by the son of Armenia's national poet. A month later, Turkish hordes swept through the district

Photos, Maynard Owen Williams



ARMENIAN CARPET MANUFACTORY IN EASTERN KURDISTAN

Neither the Turk nor the Kurd is remarkable for artistic talent, but the Armenians, with a culture going back to the age of Babylon, have, like the Asiatic Greeks, coloured the minds of their conquerors with the old native arts. Here we see two fine Kurdistan carpets being made by little Armenian maids, under supervision of older women.

Armenia

II. Its Age-long Struggle with Tyranny

By F. C. Conybeare, M.A.

Author of "Old Armenian Texts"

ON the east and west Armenia lacks natural frontiers, and so it furnished a highway from Asia into Europe, along which marched of old Assyrian and Persian armies, and later Turanian hordes. Greeks and Romans traversed it eastwards. It was a sallyport between the rival empires of Rome and Parthia, each of which the Armenians betrayed in turn on the battlefield, on behalf of their own independence, earning the hatred of both. A letter addressed about 590 by the Byzantine Emperor Maurice to the Persian King

half of the land was inhabited as early as 1100 B.C. by a warlike and civilized people, the Biaini—i.e., people of Van—who figure in contemporary Assyrian records, and whose monuments, massive walls, citadels, canals, bridges, and highroads remain. Their inscriptions litter the land, especially round Lake Van, executed in cuneiform characters, and still undeciphered except for places and persons named in them.

This Vannic civilization extended as far west as Karin, and ended about 650-600 B.C., when Indo-European invaders, Persians, and Cimmerians destroyed the kindred civilization of Assyria. The Armenians then came in from the west, being, says Herodotus, Phrygian colonists. Illiterate barbarians, they only learned to write one thousand years later under the stimulus of Christianity and in order to evade Byzantine clerical domination.

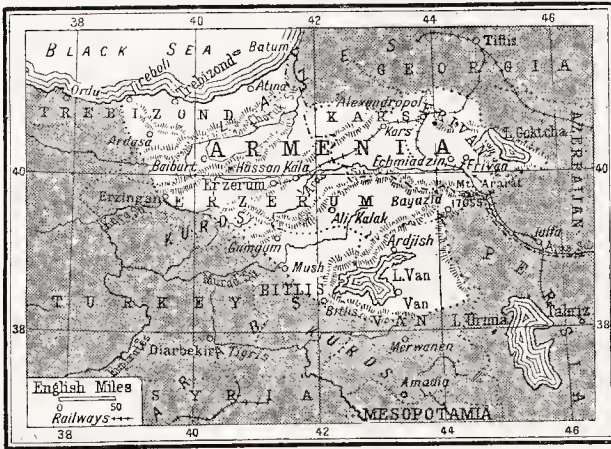
Judged by their language the Armenians were of Indo-European stock.

Cyrus, according to Xenophon, subdued them and forced them to live in peace with the older inhabitants. By 400 B.C. the

two races intermarried and shared their pasturages. Non-Aryan elements in Armenian must be due to this amalgamation. Later the tongue was overlaid with Persian, as is English by Norman French. To-day it teems with Turkish words and idioms.

Xenophon, describing his retreat in 401 with ten thousand Greek mercenaries from the Tigris across Armenia, relates that the country was subject to the Persians and ruled by two satraps; headmen of villages lived in fortified castles, and were probably feudal lords, like the heads of clans or cantons of later ages. Peasants lived with their cattle in half underground houses as to-day but the country was more prosperous than it is now. Bad government and unchecked hordes of goats had not destroyed the forests; wild asses and game were plentiful.

Armenia, even after evangelisation remained Iranic in political sympathies



ARMENIA AND ITS PEOPLES

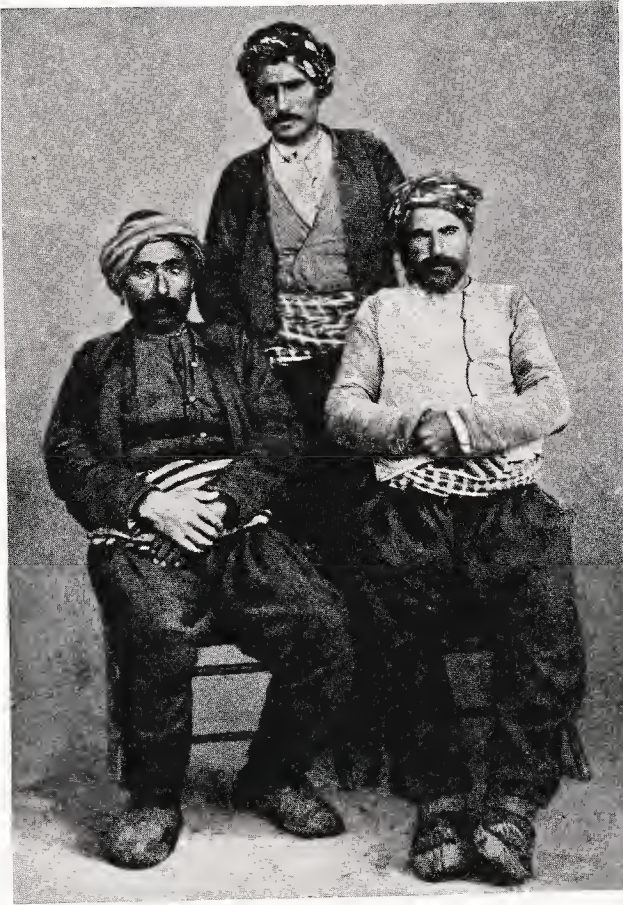
Chosroes indicates conditions which were normal at that time. The former writes :

"The Armenians are a cunning and intractable race; they live between us and are a nuisance to both of us. Now I intend to collect mine—i.e., of the Byzantine half of Armenia—and send them to Thrace—i.e., as soldiers. Do the same with yours, sending them eastwards (to Bactria). If they perish, it will be our enemies who die; but if they kill others instead, it will still be our enemies they will slay. As for ourselves, we can then have mutual peace. But as long as they are left alive in their own land there is no repose for either of us."

Such in epitome has been the history of Armenia for two thousand years, and Maurice's letter might have passed since 1800 between any Russian Tsar and any Turkish Sultan.

The Armenians are not the original inhabitants of their country, for the eastern

ARMENIA'S AGE-LONG STRUGGLE



ARMENIAN HIGHLANDERS OF THE OLD TYPE

These are the fighters of the race, who kept to a shepherd's life on the hills when townsmen were forbidden to bear arms. But there were not enough of them to save the nation from disaster

in manners, customs, and institutions. Lesser Armenia alone, farther west, was Hellenised or Romanised. Great Armenia was divided by its hills and rivers into clan units or cantons, ruled by feudal chieftains, called "nakharhars," who nominally held their estates from the king on condition of leading forth their armed retainers to aid him in war. They made their own laws and customs without consulting the king. As in many martial societies estates descended to the eldest male heir, son or brother; women were chattels and excluded from succession.

In A.D. 387 Great Armenia was partitioned between Rome and Persia. The Arsacid dynasty soon ceased in the Roman portion, but lasted on in the Persian till 428, when it, too, vanished and was replaced by a marzban, or viceroy, usually chosen by the great king among the

Armenian chieftains. In the Greek half Roman law and provincial organization were introduced little by little, as also the ecclesiastical authority of Byzantium; but not without a struggle on the part of the chieftains, whose organization Justinian sought to weaken by enacting that females should inherit equally with males. Within the Empire native customs slowly vanished before Roman law and administration; outside it Arabic conquest and Tartar invasions extinguished in the ninth or tenth century the last remnants of feudal chieftaincy, though the Pers-Armenian Church, as more racy of the soil and more feudalised, ultimately displaced everywhere the exotic ecclesiastical dominion of Byzantium.

As early as 250 a bishop of Armenia, Meruzanes, is named in a letter of Dionysius of Alexandria. The name belonged to South-East Armenia, or Sophene; and Ashtishat, on the Southern Euphrates, near Mush, remained the Mother Church of Armenia as late as 400. Meanwhile, a Greek mission headed by Gregory the Illuminator had entered from Caesarea of Cappadocia a little before 300, under the patronage of King Tiridates, a

successful Roman candidate to the throne. Lesser Armenia had been evangelised from Antioch still earlier, and Gregory's mission was really an overflow into Great Armenia of the faith already implanted there.

Throughout the fourth century the rival tenets of the Syrian and the Greek made Armenia their battleground, and the eventual Church was a blend of both. About 400 Mesrop and Sahak, Armenian saints of the following of Gregory, invented an alphabet, translated the Bible and Greek liturgies, and founded an Armenian literature, which, except for a few chronicles, is only of monkish interest.

In the crusading epoch after the failure of attempts to reunite the Church of Cilician Armenia, of which the chief See was that of Sis, with the Byzantine, overtures were made to the Latin Church,

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and Roman missionaries, generally Dominicans, busied themselves in Armenia, translating the works of Aquinas, the Latin liturgies, and many works of Latin fathers. The Vatican thus gained a clientele of perhaps 250,000 souls in Armenia, called Uniats, because, while retaining their native liturgies, they recognize the Pope's jurisdiction. To this branch belong the Mechitarists monks, who have schools and convents in Venice and Vienna, and by their learning and editions of Armenian classics aided the revival of education and patriotism.

The liberation from Turkish misrule of Greece, Bulgaria, and other Christian races operated still more to awaken among Armenians dreams of independence. It was not enough that the assembly known as the "Millet i Armeni" already furnished a measure of autonomy. This was an assembly chosen by all Turkish Armenians, which met yearly in Stamboul and regulated all purely Armenian interests, schools, churches, wills, marriages, contracts between Armenians, etc. State affairs, like army and foreign affairs, were excluded from discussion. Any demarcation of autonomous areas was impossible, for the Armenians are widely scattered and form a majority in no area of any size.

Unfortunately, in 1878, at the Congress of Berlin, British diplomats denied to Russia the right to protect Turkish Armenians just before affirmed by the Treaty of San Stefano. By the Cyprus Convention Britain then claimed it for herself, and appeared anxious to institute areas of autonomy. Nothing, however, was done, and thenceforth the Russian Government instigated the Turks to oppose any reforms at all.

The Armenians began a violent but vain agitation. They even welcomed retaliatory massacres by the Turks as likely to oblige Britain to intervene.

She did not. In the Great War they mobilised 300,000 guerrilla soldiers in response to renewed promises of Britain and Russia, only to be finally abandoned to Turkish vengeance, as it might have been foreseen they would be.

Most of Pers-Armenia was annexed in 1828 by Russia, particularly the basin of Ararat with Erivan, Nakhichevan, and Etchmiadzin, the seat since the Middle Ages of the Armenian Patriarch. Much also of Turkish Armenia was seized by Russia after the wars in 1856 and 1877. In 1917 Russian Armenia constituted itself a Republic (Erivan), having been saved by German influence from annexation by Turkey. Georgia and the province of Azerbaijan did the same, and attempted federation with Armenia. But Great Britain refused recognition to all three, and a truly Russian chaos now (1922) reigns over the entire region.

All through history Armenians have lain in political subjection to their neighbours. Clans normally separated by trackless mountains seldom met except to fight one another, rendering impossible any strong central government, and favouring foreign schemes of partition. They lacked the essential virtues of a free nation, mutual trust, spirit of compromise, farsighted patriotism, and sacrifice of sectional jealousies.

Their history is one of vendettas and feuds. Britons who only know them in the bazaars of Eastern cities complain of their cunning, avarice, cowardice, and boastfulness. They are seen at their best in their highland villages as hard working, honest peasants. They are devoted to education and trade, and adapt themselves readily to European civilization. In the past they supplied the Byzantine Empire with many of its best administrators, bravest generals, and wisest emperors. There is yet a future before them.

ARMENIA : FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

Armenia (Haikstan), a territory of Asia Minor, consists of Russian and Turkish Armenia. Up to the Russian Revolution it comprised the southern part of Caucasia and six Turkish provinces. After the revolution Georgia and Azerbaijan declared their independence, and the remainder of Russian Armenia constituted itself the Armenian Republic of Erivan. By the Treaty of Sevres the Armenian Republic was created, its boundaries being defined by ex-President Wilson. It included the Republic of Erivan, area about 80,000 square miles, and the vilayets of Van, Erzerum, Bitlis, and Trebizond in Turkish Armenia, and was recognized by the Allies. No mandate for the Turkish part of United Armenia having been undertaken by the League of Nations or the Allies, Armenia is now (1922) almost entirely possessed by Turks and Russians. Population of Russian portion in 1917 was about 2,200,000; Turkish portion in 1914 about 3,800,000. War, deportations, and massacres have greatly reduced these numbers.

Government

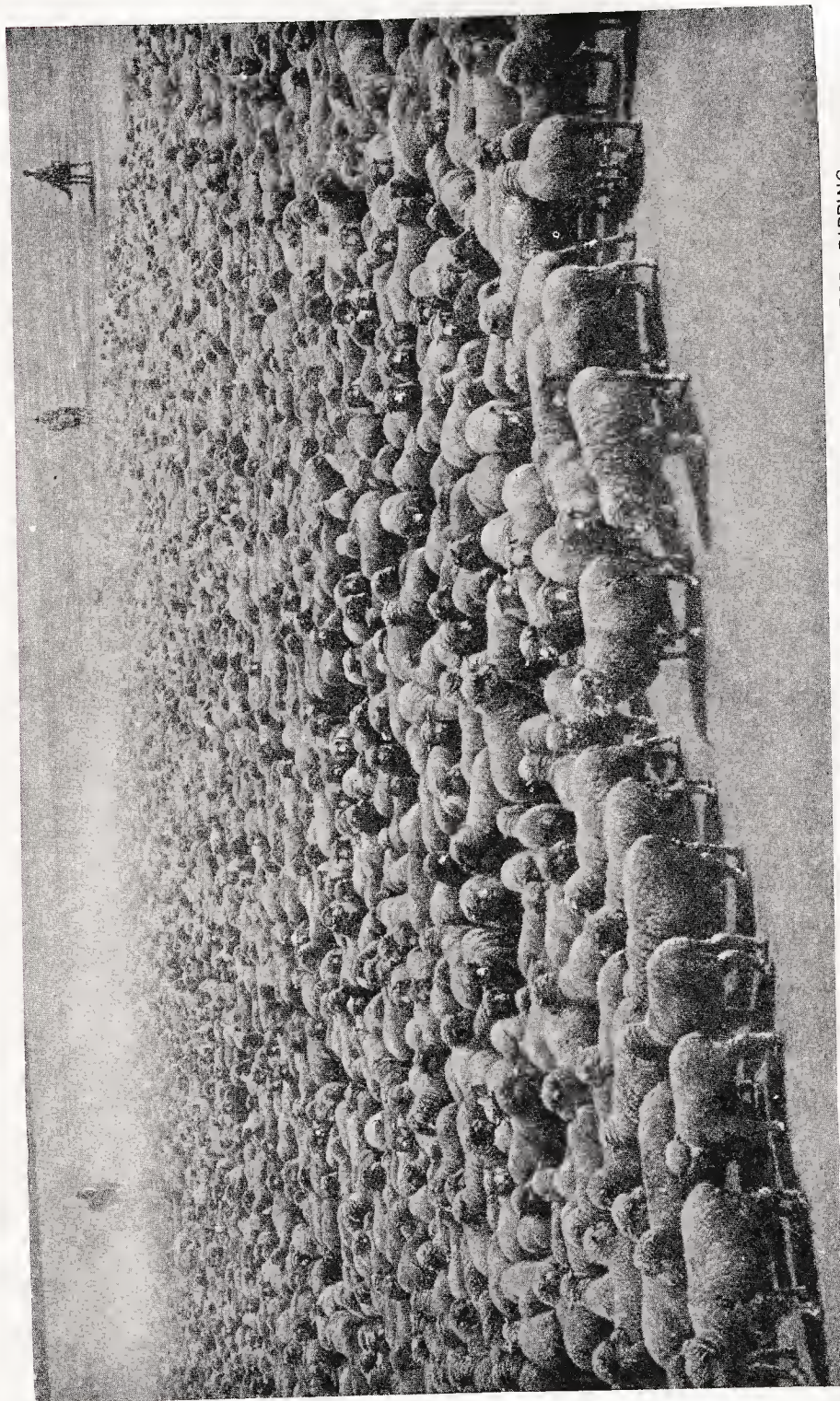
No Constitution, preparation being deferred until a Constituent Assembly can meet to organize a United Armenia. Russian Armenia (Armenian Republic) nominally governed by a Chamber of Deputies (elected 1919) and a Cabinet; actually under control of Russian Bolsheviks.

Industry and Products

Armenian life on the great plateau is mostly pastoral. In sheltered valleys cotton, rice, tobacco, flax, and corn are grown in some quantities, but unsettled conditions restrict production. Mineral deposits, including silver, copper, iron, lead, and arsenic, are rich but undeveloped.

Chief Towns

Erivan (about 90,000), Trebizond (55,000), Alexandropol (50,000), Bitlis (40,000), Kars (35,000), Van (about 30,000).



RIDING SHEPHERDS OF THE RIVERINA COLLECTING A HUGE FLOCK OF SHEEP FOR DIPPING

The Riverina, spreading from the junction of the great streams of New South Wales, is the chief sheep ground in the world. But owing to dryness and thin pastures, two acres are often needed to keep one sheep, and twenty mounted men may have to manage a run of 120,000 acres in order that the owner may make a profit. As is here evident, experience has made them finely skilful!

Photo N S W Govt